

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting of March 12, 2013
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Toll Gate High School on Tuesday, March 12, 2013. Ms. Furtado called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following in attendance:

COMMITTEE

Bethany A. Furtado, Chair
M. Terri Medeiros, Vice Chair
Jennifer Ahearn, Clerk
Eugene A. Nadeau
Karen Bachus

ADMINISTRATION

Richard D'Agostino, Acting Superintendent
Dennis Mullen, Director of Secondary Education
Robert T. Bushell, Director of Elementary Education
Rosemary Healey, Esq., Director of Compliance & Human Resources
Anthony Ferrucci, Chief Budget Officer

MOTION 2013-52: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Mr. Nadeau, to go into closed session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under General Laws of Rhode Island 42-46-5(a)(1) and (a)(2).

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye Karen Bachus – Aye
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye

Open Meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

Superintendent's contract:

MOTION 2013-53: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Medeiros, to approve and accept the contract of Dr. Richard D'Agostino as Superintendent.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye Karen Bachus – Aye
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye

The chair announced that in the past two months the Toll Gate Jazz Ensemble attended two music festivals. At the Rhode Music Educators Association Jazz Festival, held February 2nd, they were awarded a Superior rating. At the Berklee Jazz Festival held in Boston on March 2nd, they finished in eleventh place of sixteen jazz bands and were only thirteen points from fourth place "Honorable Mention". Evan Carley, the Carol Pellegrino Scholarship Award winner from last year, was recognized the Berklee Festival. Isaac Davis was named the Most Superior Musician in the division, the highest honor an individual musician can attain at the Berklee Jazz Festival. Ms. Furtado introduced the Toll Gate Jazz Ensemble: Isaac Davis(drums), Ryan Viti(drums and percussion) Szabi Kiss (piano), Evan Carley(bass), Jenny Sweet(guitar), Nathan Cornell(trumpet) Justin Salisbury(trumpet), Jake Stachurski(trumpet), Nina Yu(flute), Max Procopio(tenor sax) Lexi-Amber Hassell(tenor sax), Brianna Sousa(tenor sax) Brianna Sousa(tenor sax), Taylor Venter(tenor sax) John Abramson(tenor sax), Finn Casey(tenor sax) Dena Goldblatt(alto sax), David Stachurski(alto sax), Matt Sweet(baritone sax) Sarah Beach(baritone sax)

The Ensemble performed for the School Committee and the public present at the meeting.

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Student comments:

Scott Elementary School (grade 6): Samantha Karlson and Bella Bianco
Hoxsie Elementary School (grade 6): Caleb Ricci, Madison Diffley and Alexis Roberti
Aldrich Jr. High School: Mary Mullane and Katelyn Medeiros

The Chair thanked the principals for bringing their wonderful students and thanked the students too.
The chair made a brief announcement that at tonight's meeting we do not plan any action on the long term facility planning committee recommendation. You are welcomed to stay for public comment; that is exactly what it will be – public comment – no votes – there is nothing on agenda this evening.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION 2013-54: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Nadeau, to approve the Minutes of the Open Session for February 12, 2013 and February 19, 2013.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – [not present for vote]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

MOTION 2013-55: Moved by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Ms. Bachus, to approve the Minutes of the Executive Session for February 12, 2013 and February 19, 2013.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – [not present for vote]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

Approval of transfers:

MOTION 2013-56: Moved by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Ms. Ahearn, to approve the transfers presented to the Committee.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – [not present for vote]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

Approval of warrants:

MOTION 2013-57: Moved by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Ms. Ahearn, to approve the warrants presented to the Committee.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – [not present for vote]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

Coaching appointment:

MOTION 2013-58: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Mr. Nadeau, that the appointment of **Aaron Meredith**, assistant coach wrestling at Warwick Veterans be approved for one year only.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

Professional personnel items:

Resignation

MOTION 2013-59: Moved by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Ms. Bachus, that the **resignation of Patricia Angilly**, elementary teacher Norwood elementary School be approved effective last day of school.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

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GBP Update – Ms. Bilodeau – tracking 700 seniors; 140 students presented on February 13, 2013; 370 have completed their graduation portfolio.

2013-2014 School Year Calendar – Dr. D'Agostino presented the 2013-1014 school calendar for approval, saying it was similar to the calendar of last year.

MOTION 2013-60: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Medeiros, to approve the 2013-2014 School Year Calendar presented.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye Karen Bachus – Aye
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye

WB Health Annual Update – Mr. Ferrucci – presented an update of the WB Health Insurance coverage covering the bid process that led to the most cost effective administrative rates available, how the program works, comparing Warwick School premium cost to proposed costs; expenditures and revenues; reviewed the most recent financial statement from WB Health showing Warwick's current year status; discussing the monthly surplus/deficit of medical costs paid versus premiums contributed.

Adoption of FY 2013 recommended revised school budget as of 2/25/13

Mr. Ferrucci said that the current recommendation is being based on all known budget impact items identified through March 1, 2013.

Revenue: two positive items impacting projection

Completion of the FY2012 Workers Comp audit of actual salaries spent versus each salaries premium value.	+\$119,000
State confirmation of housing aid to be paid to Warwick Schools	+ 73,000
Total revenue projected increase	+\$193,892

Expenses:

Salary - there has been a number of extended open positions that have Been covered by subs or temporary employees – providing a salary reduction	<\$181,900>
Fringe Benefits associated with salary decreases	
Pension(state/local) covering certified staff - contribution amounts have declined – we are able to reduce projection of cost	<\$441,700>
Local pension covers non-certified staff	+\$537,819
Unemployment – number employees collecting dropped	<\$290,000>
Total fringe benefit cost decrease	<\$376,237>

Outlined below are most notable items impacting the projections for year-end:

Purchase Services #53201 thru #53706 (overall reduction 3.9%)	<\$ 91,193>
Property Services #54201 thru #54904 (overall reduction 4.1%)	<\$ 42,270>
Other purchased services #55110 thru #55930 (overall increase less than .05%)	+\$ 52,986
Supplies and materials #56101 thru #56501 (overall increase 2.4%)	\$156,178
Capital Equipment and other non-reoccurring #57202 thru #57313 (overall increase 30.1%)	\$610,223
Debt Service, misc. and fund transfers #58101 thru #59103 (increase 3.6%)	\$ 44,374

Total Recommended Revised Budget as of 3/12/13:

Revenue	\$159,335,617
Expenses	\$159,245,862
Net Surplus	\$ 89,755

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MOTION 2013-61: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Medeiros, approve the adoption of the FY2013 recommended revised school budget.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye Karen Bachus – Aye
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye

Bids/change orders:

MOTION 2013-62: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, that the bid for fire Code Improvements, Phase 2, be awarded to the low bidder for each school as per bid tabulation [\$2,066,415.00].

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye Karen Bachus – Aye
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye

Information and Proposals:

The Chair thanked VOWS, Ms. Flaherty and staff for the recent fund raisers at Dave's (breakfast) and the Warwick Museum benefit. Ms. Bachus said there will be a special ed advisory meeting tomorrow [3/13/13] at the Administration Building at 7:00 p.m. and also comment that there will be a music performance by Warwick and West Warwick at Toll Gate on April 2nd.

Mr. Nadeau acknowledged the crowd at the meeting saying he was looking at the largest crowd we have had in many months. He said he imagined it was because of Gorton. He said he had received close to 100 e-mails and personal contacts and offered his appreciation to all who had contacted him. He said he knew the anxiety of students, parents and teachers, and urged everyone to make their voices heard whether from Gorton, Aldrich or any other school.

Public comment: A senior from Pilgrim said at the last meeting there was talk about a student being installed on the School Committee and asked if there had been any further research on it. There was no comment because it was not on the agenda. **Mr. Ginolfi** said the closing would have a negative impact on our education system. He said a majority of the members on the committee did not vote in favor of the recommendation to close Gorton. Eight of the nineteen members voted, and this is a minority. He asked if the closing was predetermined. It seems facts and figures are one-sided, manipulated or ignored to bring about a pre-determined decision to close Gorton. You're looking at a short-term committee without a long-term vision. Moving meetings because of overflow was ignored. The Committee should provide direction and take charge of what is going on. **Darlene Netcoh** said she has been teaching 23 years in Warwick and said the committee's hand is being forced. The short-term committee met multiple times while the long-term facilities committee only met last week. She was disappointed with the process – principals on committee say yes it could fit but it won't be easy. How will you be able to implement new STAR system and PARCC test, which will eventually replace NECAP, both of which are computer based assessments if schools don't have necessary technology to support them? Winman is not operational until there is proper technology. Bill Malone (parent of a former Gorton student) said an important aspect to education is involved parents, and I think you have that at Gorton as evidenced here. Gorton has the highest NECAP scores of the three junior highs. Moving students away is detrimental. **Steven Andolfo** (retired Gorton teacher) wanted an answer as to whether or not mayoral academies were ever discussed by the planning committees. The question was asked at a meeting and we were told that's the city's decision. **Michael Pierce** (teacher at Gorton) said any money savings is coming from cutting facility and staff – not from closing school. The Cons listed include a loss of community identity, crowding at the other junior

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high schools and busing issues – there is nothing to do with the impact on the quality of education or the state testing regimens. **David Testa** (a member of the short-term committee) said there was no discussion whatsoever at any meeting on Charter Schools. A man, who identified himself as a **descendant of Samuel Gorton**, said he didn't feel the School Committee was paying attention to what the students, faculty and parents had to say about their school. It seems like the decision has already been made. What I want to know are you going to close the school or not. **Mr. Olson**, who has a son in the eighth grade, said his son would have to travel further to attend one of the other two junior highs, at least an extra 20 minutes at the minimum, and would have to walk home after dark during the winter months. **Susanne Racca**, commented that she was a computer teacher at a private school, and asked how the STAR system would be used when you have more students than computers. Will some students sit out while other students take required STAR assessment assignments? Aldrich has two computer rooms with 26 computers in each that are required for keyboarding classes. PARCC and STAR are assessment programs, but how will students benefit if they don't have access to the technology? **Alana Morrison**, (a student) said I've moved a lot in my life and I haven't felt more at home anywhere but Gorton. I have been in crowded classrooms and it was hard to get attention, but at Gorton I received individual attention. We need to stay together and not close any schools at all. **Melissa**, a student in the seventh grade, said John Greene was closed and now Gorton. She said she will be separated from her friends again and it will be hard on us. **Amanda Gorton** said she was also a descendant of Samuel Gorton, and presently was renting in Warwick, but would be looking at buying in East Greenwich. I don't know if my family will receive the education they deserve – I hope what you choose to do is for the best and out of wisdom, not fear. **Juliann Dutra** it means a lot to students to see their school close and for them to lose all their friends. It really hurts. **Tom Hughes**, a teacher at Gorton, said you are not looking at the recommendation with a long term vision. There are nineteen members of the panel, eight of whom brought the recommendation to you. That is a minority. **Gary Marsh** said he had been reviewing the budget, but said he couldn't compare the budgets because there is a different format every year. He asked Why are we closing school and putting students in a smaller area and asking them to do more with less. **John Sullivan**, a teacher at Aldrich, said more effective teaching is done in smaller schools and was concerned about the recommendation. **Gloria Rossiter** (a teacher at Aldrich) said the students have feelings and needs and you shouldn't just shuffle people around. Start looking at students as people. We are not ranking at the top anymore, because you don't put education first. **Julia French** 8th Grade President of Gorton said my years at Gorton in 7 and 8 grade have been the best part of my life so far. We have some of the best teachers; you can trust them with your problems. If you go to a middle school model, will other two junior highs be able to sustain it? We have many programs, including Rachel's Challenge, there will be longer bus rides, this will take a toll on after-school activities, and we won't get the proper attention with 97% capacity at the other two schools. Please reconsider closing Gorton.

The Chair thanked all the young people who were very well spoken and respectful.

Future meetings to be announced.

MOTION 2013-63: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to adjourn.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye	Karen Bachus – Aye
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye	

Meeting adjourned: 9:00 pm.